A U M

If the soul exists before birth must she not after death continue to exist, since she has to be born again. —PLATO

THEOSOPHY

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A LETTER TO A FRIEND

TELL your friend and inquirer this: No one was ever converted to Theosophy. Each one who *really* comes into it does so because it is only "an extension of previous beliefs." This will show you that Karma is a true thing. For no idea we get is any more than an extension of previous ones. That is, they are cause and effect in endless succession. Each one is the producer of the next and inhere in that successor. Thus we are all different, and some similar. My ideas today, and yours, are tinged with those of youth, and we will thus forever proceed on the inevitable line we have marked out in the beginning. We of course alter a little always, but never until our old ideas are extended. Those *false* ideas now and then discarded are not to be counted; yet they give a shadow here and there. But through Brotherhood we receive the knowledge of others, which we consider until (if it fits us) it is ours. As far as your private conclusions are concerned, use your discrimination always. Do not adopt any conclusions merely because they are uttered by one in whom you have confidence, but adopt them when they coincide with your intuition.

Some want a certificate, or an uttered pledge or a secret meeting, or a declaration, but, without any of that, I see those who—up to this hour —I find are my "companions." They need no such folly. They are there; they hear and understand the battle-cry, they recognize the sign. Now where are the rest? Many have I halted, and spoken the exact words to them, have exposed to them my real heart, and they heard nothing; they thought that heart was something else.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE, 1851—1896

THE SLEEPING VERITIES

THERE is only one place that the truth can sleep, and that is in the hearts of human beings. If there is hope for mankind in these perilous days, the hope exists because of the truth that is potential in mankind. On its face, history is written in a cipher. Who but an H.P.B., or those who sent her, could have found encouragement in the nineteenth-century scene of Europe and America? If we look at the world as it now exists, there seems extreme likelihood that the true cause of the strenuous effort of the nineteenth-century Theosophical movement was a glimpse of the coming agony of the twentieth century. Only now are the hunger, the longing, the tragic emptiness of great masses of the people of the world beginning to be manifest. One cannot help but think that, as the cycle matures, need will meet nourishment; that some repetition of the primeval encounter of unillumined psyche and matter-moving *nous,* appropriate to our age, will take place.

It is to be assumed that H.P.B. knew what she was about. She wrote, some say, a difficult book. For the first time in the history of the planet, there was put together for all to read and study a symmetrical account of universal meanings, not alone in the form of allegory, nor limited to personifications and the local colorings of time and place, but in direct communication of the pure language of metaphysics. *The Secret Doctrine* is a book for people who have come of age, or for those who are trying to come of age, or who, indeed, *must* come of age or perish.

Each fundamental affirmation of *The Secret Doctrine* has a universal ground. The basic statements are stripped of any compromise with form. There have been hymns of majesty and authority, but *The Secret Doctrine* is no hymn. Its majesty and authority lie in pure concept, the very stuff of mind. The book bespeaks an epoch of initiation into the living reality of manasic life. Its rhythm is of the unmetered figures and fugues of thought itself. Its true substance is found in what it generates in the reader, by awakening the power of thought.

The three fundamental propositions of the Secret Doctrine, as presented in the work of that name, may be taken as the model of man thinking about the great and eternal questions. What essentially is, what is becoming, and how it is becoming—this is the substance of the

fundamentals. To speak of what essentially is, is to speak of absolute reality, once termed the God-idea. The stuff of reality does not evolve, but the *conceptions* of human beings in evolution are shaped and developed by the evolutionary process. So it is that the subtle and profound conceptions of *The Secret Doctrine* could be presented in the nineteenth century, but not in the eighteenth, still less in the seventeenth.

What was the notable and far-reaching development which made possible the fruitful publication of this book? The causes no doubt were many, but an apt generalization of the *kind* of development which opened the way to the conceptual synthesis of the Secret Doctrine was unquestionably the flowering of modern scientific thought. There is much to be said for science, and considerable against it, but the ultimate characterization of the rise of scientific thinking lies in its impersonality, its absolute reliance upon principle. Science gave the steady discipline of a craft to impersonal processes of thinking. The ripest fruit of science is its impersonal, general ideas. Science contributed to the modern age the temper of impersonality. There could be no introduction to Theosophy, no slightest hint of occultism, without it.

You could say that the battle for recognition of the second fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine has long since been won. The free movement of thought, the orderly thinking of minds liberated from the fortuitous, the arbitrary, engaged in matched progressions with the intricate evolutions of Nature, the daring of the will to know and the confidence in man's capacity to know—these are qualities to be found in the work of materialist and idealist alike. This wondrous activity of the principle of knowing—this is what is surviving and will survive, and not the short-term conclusions and the hasty judgments of the hour. With science, a way of thinking was born into the world.

Why has not our age, then, been more fruitful of good? Because there are other verities which still sleep.

The first fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine deals with the absolute universality, the absolute impersonality, and the absolute presence of the One Self or Reality. As a living truth, it sleeps. It is implicit in the thought of many men, but it does not move them as it should. The content of the "object" of this proposition is completely beyond the reach of thought, but the proposition is none the less filled with meaning. So far, for those for whom it is an intuitive ground, the meaning remains critical; that is, it prevents them from falling into

theological self-deceptions. Yet it does not arm them with the courage of Adepts. It does not lift them to high deeds of understanding. It is truly the ground of all human greatness, yet the greatness sleeps in our day. Its birth lies in the unknown future—a time when men will have learned what it means to remain undisturbed by anything which may come to pass.

The truth of the first fundamental proposition has yet to make a further incarnation, to declare its presence beyond the simple fact of impersonal reality. The key to this awakening is the third fundamental proposition—the mysterious question of the individual, the linking of the One with the Many, of time and eternity, and the filling of the sense of purpose with a sense of destiny. "What is Truth?" will remain a shallow question until there is some substance in the answer to the question, "What is Man?" This is the hardly spoken but agonized wondering that may soon come to the surface in the minds of many men.

The Upanishads tell of a disciple who pursued his quest for the essence of things by peeling away skin after skin of appearances. It was not this, not that, he learned, until, by a process of negation, he found the meaning of the secret. The world of today is no disciple—at least it is not a willing searcher after truth. And yet the peeling process is already proceeding at a frightening rate. Where shall a man of today place his faith? Not in this, not in that, is the discouraging reply of the crumbling circumstances of his life.

What may prevent him from embracing some partisan doctrine of reality and self, to accomplish a desperate salvation? His heritage of impersonal thought can prevent him. This heritage does not protect all, since the heritage cannot be claimed by all, but those who represent the forward current of history cannot escape its austere command to *think*. One by one, the limiting conceptions of the self are torn away as by a giant hand. What is race? The shadow of heredity, the confinement which unmans a true human being until he forgets his physical origin and begins to live in his universal principle of mind. Now the great documents recording the high ethical achievements of Western civilization tear away the last shreds of the egotisms of race. What is a nation? A nation is many things, but most of all, today, it is an organization devoting its most potent energies to planning the destruction of a large part of mankind. Is a man a man before he is a citizen or member of some national association? The visions of racial and national

accomplishment and promise wither daily before our eyes. What institution of our time, racial, cultural, national or international, affords authentic vision of the good? Where can the man's spirit find itself?

In centuries past, the old forms of human association always gave birth to new societies which grew and prospered within the matrix of the old. Where are these new forms, today? With what can a man filled with longing for a life of dignity and promise identify his being? How can he lose himself, escape from torturing questions about himself?

He knows, in the sense of having confidence, no more about himself than he knows about the flashing passage of a shooting star on a summer evening. But while the star is lost at the horizon, the man and his questions remain. Each day the inconsistencies between his life and his feelings about life are renewed. Each day he wonders why he finds no stage to walk across, no worthy role to play.

How long can this go on? Human beings cannot turn away forever from the warnings they get from their hearts. Minds awakened to impersonal thinking can never return to the closed circuit of sectarian belief, nor can men rich in the instructions of justice and the ideal of freedom accommodate themselves to means of survival which are a vicious negation of every dream of progress that has been transmitted from one generation to another. Meanwhile, partial and partisan solutions are denied by uncompromising circumstances of the present and the immediate future.

The course is set for self-discovery—set by every device the law of cycles and karmic fulfillment can afford. The soul knows no crisis. The higher ego is not subjected to vicissitudes, except by its heaven-born obligation to the personal self. Every crisis that comes overtakes the worsening situation of the psychic nature, which periodically finds itself the victim of its own foreshortened perspectives. There is no release from this situation save by removal to a higher ground. All evidence points to the fact that, in the present crisis, this higher ground must be sought in the spiritual nature of human beings. And if the foresight of *The Secret Doctrine* may be relied upon, some perceptive version of the third fundamental proposition, concerned with the meaning of egoity, with the true fulfillment of human striving, should be the key to an awakening of the sleeping verities.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

IT is intensely interesting to follow season after season the rapid evolution and change of public thought in the direction of the mystical. The educated mind is most undeniably attempting to free itself from the heavy fetters of materialism. The ugly caterpillar is writhing in the agonies of death, under the powerful efforts of the psychic butterfly to escape from its science-built prison, and every day brings some new glad tidings of one or more such mental births to light.

As the New York *Path* truly remarks in its September issue, when "Theosophical and kindred topics . . . are made the texts for novels," and, we may add, scientific essays and *brochures,* "the implication is that interest in them has become diffused through all social ranks." That kind of literature is "paradoxically proof that Occultism has passed beyond the region of careless amusement and entered that of serious enquiry." The reader has but to throw a retrospective glance at the publications of the last few years to find that such topics as Mysticism, Magic, Sorcery, Spiritualism, Theosophy, Mesmerism, or, as it is now called, Hypnotism, all the various branches, in short, of the *Occult* side of nature, are becoming predominant in every kind of literature. They visibly increase in proportion to the efforts made to discredit the movements in the cause of truth, and strangle enquiry—whether on the field of theosophy or spiritualism—by trying to besmear their most prominent heralds, pioneers and defenders, with tar and feathers.

The key-note for mystic and theosophic literature was Marion Crawford's *Mr. Isaacs.* It was followed by his *Zoroaster.* Then followed *The Romance of Two Worlds,* by Marie Corelli; R. Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde; The Fallen Idol,* by Anstey; *King Solomon's Mines* and the thrice famous *She,* by Rider Haggard; *Affinities* and *The Brother of the Shadow,* by Mrs. Campbell Praed; Edmond Downey's *House of Tears,* and many others less noticeable. And now there comes a fresh outburst in Florence Marryat's *Daughter of the Tropics,* and F. C. Philips' *Strange Adventures of Lucy Smith.* It is unnecessary to mention in detail the literature produced by avowed theosophists and occultists,

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NOTE.—This editorial by H. P. Blavatsky opens the second issue of *Lucifer,* October, 1887. (See THEOSOPHY 37: 485 for a brief note on its context.) The article was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY for November, 1950.

some of whose works are very remarkable while others are positively scientific, such as S. L. Macgregor Mathers' *Kabbalah Unveiled,* and Dr. F. Hartmann's *Paracelsus; Magic, White and Black, etc.* We have also to note the fact that theosophy has now crossed the Channel, and is making its way into French literature. *La France* publishes a strange romance by Ch. Chincholle, pregnant with theosophy, occultism, and mesmerism, and called *"La Grande Pretresse,"* while *La Revue politique et litteraire* (19 Feb., 1887, *et seq.*) contained over the signature of Th. Bentzon, a novel called *Emancipée,* wherein esoteric doctrines and adepts are mentioned in conjunction with the names of well-known theosophists. A sign of the times!

Literature—especially in countries free from government censorship—is the public heart and pulse. Besides the glaring fact that were there no demand there would be no supply, current literature is produced only to please, and therefore evidently the mirror which faithfully reflects the state of the public mind. True, Conservative editors, and their submissive correspondents and reporters, still go on slashing occasionally in print the fair faces of mystic spiritualism and theosophy, and some of them are still found, from time to time, indulging in a *brutal* personal attack. But they do no harm on the whole, except perhaps to their own editorial reputations, and such editors can never be suspected of an exuberance of culture and good taste after certain ungentlemanly personal attacks. They do good, on the contrary. For, while the theosophists and spiritualists so attacked, may view the Billingsgate poured upon them in a true Socratean spirit, and console themselves with the knowledge that none of the epithets used can possibly apply to them, on the other hand, *too much* abuse and vilification generally ends by awakening the public sympathy for the victim, in the right-minded and the impartial, at any rate.

In England people seem to like fair play, on the whole. It is not *bashiboozook*-like actions, the doughty deeds of those who delight in mutilating the slain and wounded, that can find sympathy for any great length of time with the public. If—as maintained by our lay enemies and repeated by some *naïf* and too sanguine missionary organs—Spiritualism and Theosophy are "dead as a door-nail" (*sic, vide* American Christian periodicals),—aye "dead and buried," why, in such case, good Christian fathers, not leave the dead at rest till "Judgment Day?" And if they are not, then editors—the profane as well as the clerical—

why should you still fear? Do not show yourselves such cowards if you have the truth on your side. *Magna est veritas et prevalebit,* and "murder will out," as it always has, sooner or later. Open your columns to *free* and fearless discussion, and do as the theosophical periodicals have ever done, and as *Lucifer* is now preparing to do. The "bright Son of the morning" fears no light. He courts it, and is prepared to publish any inimical contributions (couched, of course, in decent language), however much at variance with his theosophical views. He is determined to give a fair hearing, in any and every case, to both contending parties, and allow things and thoughts to be judged on their respective merits. For why, or what, should one dread when fact and truth are one's only aim? *Du choc des opinions jaillit la verité* was said by a French philosopher. If Theosophy and Spiritualism are no better than "gigantic frauds and will-o'-the-wisps of the age" why such *expensive* crusades against both? And if they are not, why should Agnostics and searchers after truth in general, help bigoted and narrow-minded materialists, sectarians and dogmatists to hide our light under a bushel by mere brutal force and usurped authority? It is easy to surprise the good faith of the fair-minded. Still easier to discredit that which by its intrinsic strangeness is already unpopular and could hardly be credited in its palmiest days. "We welcome no supposition so eagerly as one which accords with and intensifies our own prejudices," says, in *Don Jesualdo,* a popular author. Therefore, *facts* become often cunningly concocted "frauds"; and self-evident, glaring lies are accepted as gospel truths at the first breeze of Don Basilio's *Calumnia,* by those to whose hard-crusted pre-conceptions such slander is like heavenly dew.

But, beloved enemies, "the light of Lucifer" may, after all, dispel some of the surrounding darkness. The mighty roaring voice of denunciation, so welcome to those whose little spites and hates and mental stagnation in the grasp of the social respectability it panders to, may yet be silenced by the voice of truth—"the still small voice"—whose destiny it ever was to first preach in the desert. That cold and artificial light which still seems to shine so dazzlingly over the alleged iniquities of professional mediums and the supposed sins of commission and omission of *non-professional* experimentalists, of free and independent theosophists, may yet be extinguished at the height of all its glory. For it is not quite the perpetual lamp of the alchemist philosopher. Still less is it that "light which never shone on sea or land," that ray of divine

intuition, the spark which glimmers latent in the spiritual, never-erring perceptions of man and woman, and which is now awakening—for its time is at hand. A few years more, and the Aladdin's lamp, which called forth the ministering genius thereof, who, making three salutes to the public, proceeded forthwith to devour mediums and theosophists, like a juggler who swallows swords at a village fair, will get out of order. Its light, over which the anti-theosophists are crowing victory to this day, shall get dim. And then, perhaps, it will be discovered that what was claimed as a direct ray from the source of eternal truth was no better than a penny rush-light, in whose deceitful smoke and soot people got hypnotized, and saw everything upside down. It will be found that the hideous monsters of fraud and imposture had no existence outside the murky and dizzied brains of the Aladdins on their journey of discovery. And that, finally, the good people who listened to them, had been all the time seeing sights and hearing things under unconscious and mutual *suggestion*.

This is a scientific explanation, and requires no black magicians or *dugpas* at work; for "suggestion" as now practised by the sorcerers of science is—*dugpaship* itself, *pur sang*. No Eastern "adept of the *left* hand" can do more mischief by his infernal art than a grave hypnotizer of the Faculty of Medicine, a disciple of Charcot, or any other scientific *light* of the first magnitude. In Paris, as in St. Petersburg, crimes have been committed under "suggestion." Divorces have occurred, and husbands have nearly killed their wives and their supposed co-respondents, owing to tricks played on innocent and respectable women, who have thus had their fair name and all their future life blasted for ever. A son, under such influence, broke open the desk of an avaricious father, who caught him in the act, and nearly shot him in a fit of rage. One of the keys of Occultism is in the hands of science—cold, heartless, materialistic, and crassly ignorant of the other truly psychic side of the phenomenon: hence, powerless to draw a line of demarcation between the physiological and the purely spiritual effects of the disease inoculated, and unable to prevent future results and consequences of which it has no knowledge, and over which it has, therefore, no control.

We find in the *Lotus* of September, 1887, the following:—

> A French paper, the *Paris,* for August 12th, contains a long and excellent article by G. Montorgueil, entitled, *The Accursed Sciences,* from which we extract the following passage . . .:—

"Some months ago, already, in I forget what case, the question of 'suggestion' was raised and taken account of by the judges. We shall certainly see people in the dock accused of occult malpractices. But how will the prosecution go to work? What arguments will it bring to bear? The crime by 'suggestion' is the ideal of a crime without proof. In such a case the gravest charges will never be more than presumptions, and fugitive presumptions. On what fragile scaffolding of suspicions will the charge rest? No examination, but a moral one, will be possible. We shall have to resign ourselves to hearing the Solicitor-general say to the accused: 'Accused, it appears from a perquisition made into your brain, etc.'

"Ah, the poor jurymen! it is they who are to be pitied. Taking their task to heart, they already have the greatest difficulty in separating the true from the false, even in rough and ready cases, the facts of which are obvious, all the details of which are tangible and the responsibilities clear. And we are going to ask them on their soul and conscience to decide questions of black magic! Verily their reason will not hold out through the fortnight; it will give way before that and sink into thaumaturgy.

"We move fast. The strange trials for sorcery will blossom anew; somnambules who were merely grotesque will appear in a tragic light; the coffee grounds, which so far only risked the police court, will hear their sentence at the assizes. The evil eye will figure among criminal offences. These last years of the XIX century will have seen us step from progress to progress, till we reach at last this judicial enormity: a second Laubardemont prosecuting another Urbain Grandier."

Serious, scientific, and political papers are full of earnest discussions on the subject. A St. Petersburg *Daily* has a long *feuilleton* on the "Bearing of *Hypnotic Suggestions* upon Criminal Law." "Cases of Hypnotism with criminal motive have of late begun to increase in an ever progressing ratio," it tells its readers. And it is not the only newspaper, nor is Russia the only country where the same tale is told. Careful investigations and researches have been made by distinguished lawyers and medical authorities. Data have been assiduously collected and have revealed that the curious phenomenon—which sceptics have hitherto derided, and young people have included among their evening *petits jeux innocents*—is a new and terrible danger to state and society.

Two facts have now become patent to law and science:—

(I) *That, in the perceptions of the hypnotized subject, the visionary representations called forth by "suggestion," become real existing actualities, the subject being, for the moment, the automatic executor of the will of the hypnotizer; and—*

(II) *That the great majority of persons experimented upon, is subject to hypnotic suggestion.*

Thus Liébeault found only *sixty* subjects intractable out of the *seven hundred* he experimented upon; and Bernheim, out of 1,014 subjects, failed with only *twenty-six.* The field for the natural-born *jadoo-wala* (sorcery-mongers), is vast indeed! Evil has acquired a play-ground on which it may now exercise its sway upon many a generation of unconscious victims. For crimes undreamt of in the waking state, and felonies of the blackest dye, are now invited and encouraged by the new "accursed science." The real perpetrators of these deeds of darkness may now remain forever hidden from the vengeance of human justice. The hand which executes the criminal suggestion is only that of an irresponsible automaton, whose memory preserves no trace of it, and who, moreover, is a witness who can be easily disposed of by compulsory suicide —again under "suggestion." What better means than these could be offered to the fiends of lust and revenge, to those dark Powers—called human passions—ever on the lookout to break the universal commandment: "Thou shalt not steal, nor murder, nor lust after thy neighbor's wife"? Liébeault *suggested* to a young girl that she should poison herself with prussic acid, and she swallowed the supposed drug without one moment's hesitation; Dr. Liégois suggested to a young woman that she owed him 5,000 francs, and the subject forthwith signed a cheque for the amount. Bernheim *suggested* to another hysterical girl a long and complicated vision with regard to a criminal case. Two days later, although the hypnotizer had not exercised any pressure upon her in the interim, she repeated distinctly the whole suggested story to a lawyer sent to her for the purpose. Had her evidence been seriously accepted, it would have brought the accused to the guillotine.

These cases present two dark and terrible aspects. From the moral standpoint, such processes and *suggestions* leave an indelible stain upon the purity of the subject's nature. Even the innocent mind of a ten-year-old child can thus be inoculated with vice, the poison-germ of which will develop in his subsequent life.

On the judicial aspect it is needless to enter in great detail. Suffice to say that it is this characteristic feature of the hypnotic state—the absolute surrender of will and self-consciousness to the hypnotizer—which possesses such importance, from its bearing upon crime, in the eyes of the legal authorities. For if the hypnotizer has the subject entirely at

his beck and call, so that he can cause him to commit any crime, acting, so to say, invisibly within him, then what are not the terrible "judicial mistakes" to be expected? What wonder then, that the jurisprudence of one country after the other has taken alarm, and is devising, one after the other, measures for repressing the exercise of hypnotism! In Denmark it has just been forbidden. Scientists have experimented upon sensitives with so much success that a hypnotized victim has been jeered and hooted through the streets on his way to commit a crime, which he would have completed unconsciously, had not the victim been warned beforehand by the hypnotizer. In Brussels a recent and sad case is well-known to all. A young girl of good family was seduced while in a hypnotized state by a man who had first subjected her to his influence at a social gathering. She only realized her condition a few months later, when her relatives, who divined the criminal, forced her seducer to make the only possible reparation—that of marrying his victim.

The French Academy has just been debating the question:—how far a hypnotized subject, from a mere victim, can become a regular tool of crime. Of course, no jurist or legislator can remain indifferent to this question; and it was averred that the crimes committed under *suggestion* are so unprecedented that some of them can hardly be brought within the scope of the law. Hence the prudent legal prohibition, just adopted in France, which enacts that no person, save those legally qualified to exercise the medical profession, shall hypnotize any other person. Even the physician who enjoys such legal right is permitted to hypnotize a person only in the presence of another qualified medical man, and with the written permission of the subject. Public *séances* of hypnotism are forbidden, and they are strictly confined to medical *cliniques* and laboratories. Those who break this law are liable to a heavy fine and imprisonment.

But the keynote has been struck, and many are the ways in which this *black art* may be used—laws notwithstanding. That it will be so used, the vile passions inherent in human nature are sufficient guarantee.

Many and strange will be the romances yet enacted; for truth is often stranger than fiction, and what is thought fiction is still more often truth.

No wonder then that occult literature is growing with every day. Occultism and sorcery are in the air, with no true philosophical knowledge to guide the experimenters and thus check the evil results. "Works of *fiction*," the various novels and romances are called. "Fiction" in the

arrangement of their characters and the adventures of their heroes and heroines—admitted. Not so, as to the *facts* presented. These are *no fictions,* but true *presentiments* of what lies in the bosom of the future, and much of which is already born—nay corroborated by *scientific* experiments. Sign of the times! Close of a psychic cycle! The time for phenomena with, or through mediums, whether professional or otherwise, is gone by. It was the early season of the blossoming of the era mentioned in the Bible;[1] the tree of Occultism is now preparing for "fruiting," and the spirit of the Occult is awakening in the blood of the new generations. If the old men only "dream dreams," the young ones see already visions,[2] and—record them in novels and works of fiction. Woe to the ignorant and the unprepared, and those who listen to the sirens of materialistic science! For indeed, indeed, many will be the unconscious crimes committed, and many will be the victims who will innocently suffer death by hanging and decapitation at the hands of the righteous judges and the *too innocent* jurymen, both alike ignorant of the fiendish power of "SUGGESTION."

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[1] It shall come to pass that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions." (Joel ii, 28.)

[2] It is curious to note that Mr. Louis Stevenson, one of the most powerful of our imaginative writers, stated recently to a reporter that he is in the habit of constructing the plots of his tales in *dreams,* and among others that of Dr. Jekyll. "I dreamed," he continued, "the story of 'Olalla' . . . and I have at the present moment two unwritten stories which I have likewise dreamed. . . . Even when fast asleep I know that it is I who am inventing." . . . But who knows whether the idea of "invention" is not also "a dream"!

PROGRESS AND CULTURE

Whither shall we turn to find a corroboration of the mendacious claim that we owe our civilization and culture, our arts, sciences, and all, to the elevating and benign influence of Christianity? We owe to it nothing—nothing at all, neither physically nor morally. The progress we have achieved, so far, relates in every case to purely physical appliances, to objects and things, not to the *inner* man. . . . The simple truth is that the word "civilization" is a very vague and undefined term. Like good and evil, beauty and ugliness, etc., civilization and barbarism are relative terms. . . .

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE

VII

(From p. 200 to p. 212, Vol. I.)

FUNCTION OF COMETS. Comets are the wanderers who, in the great struggle and rush of matter in any place where a system of worlds is to come into existence, act as aggregators or collectors of the cosmic matter until at last sufficient collections are made to cause the beginning of globes. *Italics on p. 201, v. I.*

CYCLES. There is always much discussion respecting this vast and interesting subject, not only in theosophical circles but outside as well. Indeed, the discussion was begun ages before our T.S. was formed. It will hardly be finished in our life. The dispute or difficulty has not been as to whether there are cycles governing men and affairs, for the most materialistic are wont to talk of the cycles of recurrence of diseases, wars, and the like, but about when any cycle begins, and especially the larger ones. One of the Moon's cycles is known, and that of the great sidereal vault is approximated, but when we come to such as the latter there is considerable vagueness as to what was the state of things 25,000 years ago. On page 202 of vol. I, the hint is given that the fundamental basis controlling number and ground-work of the cycles is laid in the very beginning of the cosmic struggle anterior to the aggregation of matter into globes and suns. For (*at foot p. 202*),

> "This is the basic and fundamental stone of the secret cycles. . . ." The assertion that all the worlds (Stars, planets, etc.)—as soon as a nucleus of primordial substance in the *laya* (undifferentiated) state is informed by the freed principles of a just *deceased* sidereal body—become first comets, and then Suns, to cool down to inhabitable worlds, is a teaching as old as the Rishis.

Now in each system the "struggle" is different from every other, a different proportion arises, and, the percentage of loss or remainder being variable, the cyclic bases in each system differ from others. It is very plain, then, that our present-day scientists can know nothing of these original differences and must remain ignorant of the true cycles.

NOTE.—These sections of "Hidden Hints" were first printed in the *Path* for October, 1891, and January, February, 1892. They were last reprinted in THEOSOPHY for May, June, July, 1947.

Only the eagle eye of the high Adept can see these numbers as they are written upon the great screen of time, and in the whispers that reach us from the ancient mysteries can be found the information we are seeking. Who shall hear aright?

THE VERY BEGINNING. Definitely as to the very beginning of manifestation—not of this little system of ours, but of the one vast whole—it is not possible nor permissible to speak. But a hint of seductive nature is thrown out on *p. 203, 3rd par.*, where, taking us back to the first act in the great drama of which our puny play is but a short sentence, H.P.B. says that the secret science declares that when the one great all has been thrown out into manifestation seven special differentiations of IT appear, and from those seven all the countless fires, suns, planets, and stars are lighted and go forth. So that, although in various systems of worlds the cycles and the numbers and bases may differ and be any whole number or fractional number, the great and perfect number is still *seven*. But no man now among us can understand the great *seven* when it includes all numbers the mind may reach by chance or by calculation.

VIII

(From p. 212 to p. 252, Vol. I.)

From p. 212 to 221 the reader can for himself find all that the author of the *Secret Doctrine* desired to give out in those pages.

WHAT ARE ELEMENTALS? In describing the groups of the Hierarchies the 6th and 7th groups are touched on at *page 221*, where it is said that elementals are a part of the numberless side groups "shot out like boughs of a tree from the first central group of the four." And they are all subject to Karma (19th line, p. 221), which they have to work out during every cycle. As it is said, lower on the page, "A Dhyan Chohan has to become" such, it must follow that even a Dhyan Chohan was once at work in the planes of being where elementals are, and from that rose up to the higher place; this must be under the laws of evolution, of Karma, of Reincarnation.

MAN'S GREAT DESTINY. Following the argument hinted at about elementals, on p. 221, it is said that the celestial Hierarchy of this Manvantara will be transferred in the next cycle of life to higher, superior worlds, in order to make room for a new hierarchy, of the same order, which will be composed of the elect ones of our own human race. Such is our destiny, and such the path up which we climb; and when that point

is reached, we must work still on for the benefit of those below us. This is the basis of altruism, and without altruism the consummation cannot be reached.

THAT HIGH SPIRITS WORK ON EARTH in bodies of men, while those spirits are still in the highest spheres, see *pp. 233-234 and notes,* also *note p. 235.* On p. 233 it is clearly explained that the author does not mean that which is called among the spiritualists "control" of mediums by a spirit, but the actual continuance of the status and functions of the incarnated spirit in the supersensuous regions, while actually using as its own and working in a moral envelope on earth. So that, according to her, there are certain persons on this earth, living and working as ordinary human beings and members of society, whose informing divine part is so immeasurably high in development that they as such high beings have a definite status and function in the "supersensuous regions." We should say—assuming the correctness of the author's statement—that she herself was such a case, and that "H.P.B.," whether hourly in the day or at night when all round was still, had a "status and function" in other spheres where she consciously carried on the work of that high station, whatever it was. There were many events in her daily life known to those who were intimate with her that this hint may unravel, or at least shed much light upon. And in one of her letters this sentence appears —in substance—"The difference between you and me is that you are not conscious except at day, while I am conscious day and night, and have much to do and to endure in both of these existences from which you, being thus half-conscious, are happily saved."

In the Hindu books and teachings there is a reference to this when they speak of high *gnanees*—that is, persons full of knowledge and spiritual power—being attracted to this earth by certain acts and at certain times in the history of nation, race, or city.

LOSS OF THE SOUL. The possibility of the abandonment of the body by the soul is outlined on *page 234* thus: "the soul could free itself from and quit the tabernacle [of the body] for various reasons—such as insanity, spiritual and physical depravity, etc." And at the end of the note on p. 235 it is hinted broadly that such freeing of the soul from the body, leaving the latter to run out its course, is not confined to the case of those who are insane or depraved, but may occur with those who make great advance in knowledge and such consequent alteration in the constitution of the soul, as it were, that they no longer can dwell on earth, using the

old body. It does not appear, however, that this subject is carried any further than this hint, found, as is so usual with H.P.B., in a note. In this the words are: "For [this] occurrence is found to take place in wicked materialists *as well as in persons 'who advance in holiness and never turn back'*." From my knowledge of her methods I regard this note as a deliberate reverse of sentence, in which the object is found in the words used in the underlined part.

THE NECESSITY FOR INDIVIDUAL EFFORT. This is very emphatically put, and in precisely the style of H.P.B. in the 3rd paragraph on *page 244*, in the parallelisms, where *Atma* is spoken of. Here she shows that Atma is not subject to change or improvement, but is the "ray of light eternal which shines upon and through the darkness of matter—*when the latter is willing*." (Italics are mine.) If matter, in the human being, the personal self, the body, and the astral body, with passions and desires, is not willing to be fully informed by the Spirit, then *Atma* will not shine through it because it cannot, inasmuch as matter then does not submit itself to the Divine behests. The willingness can only be shown by individual effort toward goodness and purification. It would seem that this ought to do away with that negation and supineness indulged in even by theosophists who talk of "not interfering with Karma."

ONLY THREE DIMENSIONS OF MATTER. The "fourth dimension" is combatted on *pages 251-252 et seq.*: "So long as there are foot-rules within the resources of Kosmos, to apply to matter, so long will they be able to measure it in three ways and no more" (p. 252).

IX

(From p. 252 to p. 260, Vol. I.)

ORDER OF THE ELEMENTALS ESOTERICALLY is, *Fire, air, water, earth.* (*2nd par.*) Counting up from the earth, the order for the elementals, or the nature spirits in the elementals, is: earth elementals, water elementals, air elementals, fire elementals. And it has always been said that those of the fire are the wisest and most distant so far as cognition of or by us is concerned, that the airy ones are also wise, and those of the water dangerous. Those of the earth have been described by seers in the form of gnomes sometimes seen by clairvoyant miners in the depths under us, and of this class also are those that have given rise to the superstition among the Irish respecting the fairies.

FIRE IN THE PRECEDING ROUNDS. She says (p. 253), "For all we know, FIRE may have been *pure* AKASA, the first Matter of the . . . 'Build-

ers'." The phrase "For all we know" is sometimes to be translated "Thus it was."

THE FIFTH ELEMENT IN THE FIFTH ROUND. This, as said before in these notes, will be "the gross body of Akasa" (257), and "by becoming a familiar fact of Nature to all men, as air is familiar to us now, [will] cease to be . . . hypothetical."

WHAT IS THE SIXTH SENSE TO BE? In the first paragraph of page 258 she says that at first there will be a partial familiarity with a characteristic of matter to be known then as permeability, which will be perceived when certain senses have been developed, and after that this singular characteristic will be fully known, as it will be developed concurrently with the sixth sense. We may therefore argue that she means to describe the sixth sense as one which will (among other things) give to us the power to permeate matter with ourselves. Let some one else now carry this idea further, as it is no doubt correct. It would seem that both the matter-characteristic and the power in man are being here and there exhibited, or else some of the phenomena seen at spiritualistic séances could never have happened; but alas! we need not look for aid there so long as the beloved "spirits from the summerland" continue to hold sway over their votaries.

THE EARTH IN ITS EARLY PERIODS. Some students have thought that this globe in its early times—when, following the statements in *Esoteric Buddhism,* the human life-wave and so on had not come—had no life on it, supposing in a vague way that there was, say in the fire-mist time, a mass of something devoid of life. This is contradicted and explained on page 258 in the second paragraph, for: "Thus Occultism disposes of the so-called Azoic age of Science, for it shows that there never was a time when the Earth was without life upon it." This is asserted for no matter what form or sort of matter, thus: "Wherever there is an atom of matter, a particle or a molecule, even in its most gaseous condition, there is life in it, however latent and unconscious."

OF SPIRIT AND MATTER. In the commentary on *p. 258* the author plainly writes, "Spirit is the first differentiation of (and in) SPACE; and Matter is the first differentiation of Spirit." This is a clear statement of what she desired to teach respecting spirit and matter, and as in other places it is said that spirit and matter are the opposite poles of the One —the Absolute—and agreement has to be made between the two. There is no real disagreement, since it is evident that differentiation must pro-

ceed in a definite order, from which it results that there must be always one state, plane, place, power, and idea in nature that is above and different from and beyond all others. And when we go beyond spirit, the highest we may speak of is the Absolute, which is the container of the next two—spirit and matter, the latter following the first in order of differentiation. These are said to be co-eternal, and, indeed, are so, as far as our minds are concerned, for the reason that we cannot grasp either the first or the second differentiation of the Absolute. But because this doctrine of the co-eternalness of spirit and matter has been taught, there never being the one without the other also present, some students have fallen into a materialistic view, probably because matter is that which being near to us is most apparent, and others, remaining somewhat vague, do not define the doctrine at all. Spirit and matter are co-eternal because they exist together in the Absolute, and when the first differentiation spoken of above takes place, so does the second immediately. Hence, except when we are dealing with metaphysics, they must be regarded as the two poles of the one absolute. And the *Bhagavad-Gita* does not support the contrary, for it only says there is no spirit without also matter, as it is dealing through the words of Krishna with things as they are *after* the differentiation has taken place.

There is another class of theosophists who speak of the "super-personal god," asserting at the same time that they do not mean "a personal God," and they are opposed by still another class who point to the well-known denial by H.P.B. of the existence of a personal god. It is in the sentence quoted that both of these may come to an agreement, for the believers in the super-personal deity can without doubt find support in the lines on page 258. For if spirit is the first, then matter is a grade below it, however fine and imperceptible that distinction may be.

If further we say, as many of us do, that the great inherent ideas of man were given to him by the first great teachers whose descendants and pupils the Adepts are, then we here also see how it is that there is such a wide and universal belief in a God.

It must, again, be the origin of that universal optimism which may be found also in the ranks of the theosophists, who, while for present days are pessimistic, must be called the greatest optimists on the face of the earth. There are many other matters in this sentence. Many a student has puzzled his head very often in trying to discover from where come the impulse and the plan as well as the idea of perfection, for it must as

a first thing reside somewhere, whether abstractly or concretely. Perhaps it is here; those students can look here at any rate.

A MYSTERIOUS PRINCIPLE MENTIONED. After going for a little space into the formation of this globe by the first builders, she speaks (page 259) of a certain *akasic* principle to which no name is given but left in hiatus. But in the note on that page we see, and I am violating nothing in referring to it, that very clearly it is pointed out that the primordial substance of which she then writes *"is the body of those Spirits themselves, and their very essence."* Now in many places in her writings, and also in those of other knowing ones through all time, this primordial substance is said to be one that, once controlled, gives him who has power over it the most transcendent abilities—sway alike over mind and matter.

She and all the rest of us are quite safe in speaking of it, since there are but few indeed who will see anything in it at all. Yet the few can have the hint if they never got it before. This, however, should always remain as a hint, and there ought to be no attempt to make it clear to science, for nothing will be gained except ridicule and maybe worse.

THE RAW PERIOD OF EVOLUTION

Because ultimately all nations must form one humanity embracing the whole world, becoming one race—the whole human race living in one society based on justice and truth—we must no longer be ruled by the narrow prejudice that divides human beings into different strata according to the color of their skins, or by differing traditions and inheritances. In the end these narrow feelings must cease to influence our lives. Once free of these bonds forged in the raw period of our evolution, we shall know that there is a vast difference between loving the land of our birth and hating foreigners. . . . Knowledge, still lacking in all spheres, must be increased. Let men learn to become revolutionary, not military leaders, idealistic, possessing the conscientiousness and the knowledge necessary for them to be clear that they are fighting also for the rest of humanity.

—SOETAN SJAHRIR

QUESTION–AND COMMENT

IN Isis Unveiled I, *184, we find the following: "According to the Kabalistic doctrine, the future exists in the astral light in embryo, as the present existed in embryo in the past. While man is free to act as he pleases, the manner in which he* will *act was foreknown from all time; not on the ground of fatalism or destiny, but simply on the principle of universal, unchangeable harmony, and, as it may be foreknown that, when a musical note is struck, its vibrations will not, and cannot, change into those of another note."*

Now, either this is literally true or it is not. If true, I cannot see in what way it differs from fatalism. For example, what is the use of any one of us struggling for perfection and spiritual wisdom if we are, from the start, doomed to failure?—if, no matter what we do, we cannot change our predestined "note" into any other higher note?

It may be that most students have never been troubled by the foregoing quotation, but for me it has always been the greatest deterrent to effort and enthusiasm of any statement in the philosophy. Not only as regards myself, but as applied to any and all whom one makes an effort to help.

If this quotation is true, then it must also have been foredained that I should have allowed it to trouble me and become a stumbling block for me.

Any remarks or suggestions on the subject will be appreciated.

From the standpoint of the "personal man," every truth must have its troubling aspect—and it is also inevitable that whatever is meant to be conveyed by a transmitted teaching will be to some degree misapprehended. For both antipathy and the desire for reward will forever distort doctrine and render it, in transmission, something less than the truth.

In regard to this particular question there seems a special reason for this general observation. In one of her particularly disarming replies to a student's question (*Transactions*, p. 97), H. P. Blavatsky endeavors to explain why positing the existence of prototypes in the Akasa for all living forms—reflected on this plane in the Astral Light—does *not* imply that the life in those forms is static. H.P.B's questioner wanted to know how, if every *form* of life has existed prior to the beginning of

this Manvantara, evolution can be said to take place at all. H.P.B. writes:

> We may compare the Akasa and the Astral Light, with regard to these prototypes, to the germ in the acorn. The latter, besides containing in itself the astral form of the future oak, conceals the germ from which grows a tree containing millions of forms. These forms are contained in the acorn potentially, yet the development of each particular acorn depends upon extraneous circumstances, physical forces, etc. . . . We see every plant has an intelligence, or its own purpose of life, so to speak, and its own freewill, to a degree. This is how I, at any rate, understand it. A plant can be receptive or non-receptive, though *every plant without an exception* feels and has a consciousness of its own.

Even the *forms* are fixed, however, for this Manvantara only, so that the statement in *Isis* in respect to "all time" clearly refers to the conditions of this particular period of manifestation. And it would seem that the word "conditions" should be emphasized as having much to do with "the manner in which he [man] will act." For the *manner* in which we will act simply refers to the peculiar conditions of embodiment which have been built out of our own accomplishments and transgressions in a prior period of evolution. Man as divine *prototype* is not conditionable, but man as the psychic being who is wedded to the lower plane stimuli of the Astral Light *is* conditionable to a frightening degree. This, we take it, accounts for the paradox of the passage quoted from the *Transactions*.

We are denizens of the Astral Light, psychically, emotionally, and intellectually. Our "manner" in life may be said to follow predictable patterns; we move along what Buddha called the "tracks" of existence, whereas the truly enlightened ones are "trackless" and therefore have escaped the endless chain of involuntary incarnation in events and circumstances demanded by lower manasic living.

In another portion of the *Transactions* (p. 66-7), H.P.B. refers to the question of free will in discussing the difference between the dreaming consciousness of the average man (the "Astral Light man") and the consciousness of the adept—whose medium of perception is pure Akasa. She writes:

> One must be far advanced on the "path" to have a will which can act consciously during his physical sleep. . . . When an adept suceeds in doing this he is a *Jivanmukta*: he is no more of this earth virtually, and becomes a Nirvanee, who can go into *Samadhi* at will. Adepts are generally classed by the number of "principles" they have under their

perfect control, for that which we call will has its seat in the higher EGO, and the latter, when it is rid of its sin-laden personality, is divine and pure.

Now, turning to *The Secret Doctrine* II, 512-13, we find this explanation of the relationship between the pervasive memories of the Astral Light and the destiny of individual man:

> As the finite in the Infinite, as regards manifestation, this light must have its shadowy side—as already remarked. And as the infinite can never be manifested, hence the finite world has to be satisfied with the *shadow alone,* which its actions draw upon humanity and which men attract *and force to activity.* Hence, while it is the *universal Cause* in its unmanifested unity and infinity, the Astral light becomes, with regard to Mankind, simply the effects of the causes produced by men in their sinful lives. It is not its bright denizens—whether they are called Spirits of Light or Darkness—that produce Good or Evil, but mankind itself that determines the unavoidable action and reaction in the great magic agent. It is mankind which has become the "Serpent of Genesis," and thus causes daily and hourly the Fall and sin of the "Celestial Virgin"—which thus becomes the Mother of gods and devils at one and the same time; for she is the ever-loving, beneficent deity to all those who stir her *Soul and heart,* instead of attracting to themselves her shadowy manifested essence, called by Eliphas Levi "the fatal light" which kills and destroys. Humanity, in its units, can overpower and master its effects; but only by the holiness of their lives and by producing good causes. It has power only on the manifested *lower* principles—the shadow of the Unknown and Incognizable Deity in Space.

In the *Secret Doctrine* section titled "Cyclic Evolution and Karma" are passages which seem appropriate to an inquiry into the relationship between the Astral Light and Karma. The celestial prototype of which H.P.B. here speaks has to do with Akasa rather than the Astral Light:

> The closer the union between the mortal reflection MAN and his celestial PROTOTYPE, the less dangerous the external conditions and subsequent reincarnations—which neither Buddhas nor Christs can escape. This is not superstition, least of all is it *Fatalism.* The latter implies a blind course of some still blinder power, and man is a free agent during his stay on earth. He cannot escape his *ruling* Destiny, but he has the choice of two paths that lead him in that direction, and he can reach the goal of misery—if such is decreed to him, either in the snowy white robes of the Martyr, or in the soiled garments of a volunteer in the iniquitous course; for, there are *external and internal conditions* which affect the determination of our will upon our actions, and it is in our power to follow either of the two. (*Secret Doctrine* I, 639.)

It is difficult to make a summary of this extraordinarily abstruse subject, but every student who has followed the discussion thus far may attempt it for himself. Apart from the fact that H.P.B.'s choice of words and terms in *Isis,* as she pointed out, was often faulty so far as carrying her full intended meaning, it is plain that certain conditions of the human situation for each man have been "fixed" on the basis of a prior period of evolution. The qualification is this: So long as a man moves along the "track" of psychically oriented existence, the manner in which he will act can be foreknown—and the general amount of knowledge which can be gained in any lifetime will be minimal. But if one acts "from within, without," if he perceives in terms of that permanence which Akasic sight symbolizes, and passes beyond the striving for illusory goals whose symbols are reflected in the Astral Light alone, he is no longer subject to the conditioning of lower Manas or the conditions of being which have been established at a lower manasic plane.

All this is precisely the paradox which one whom H.P.B. calls an "Initiate" was endeavoring to convey in the Myth of Er in the last book of *The Republic;* for Plato saw each soul as free to choose conditions of a new birth, though at the same time responding to the psychic allurements to which it was habitually attracted. So such "choices," on the lower plane, *are* predictable.

"ABOVE TIME"

The soul stands above time and knows nothing of time nor of body. The happenings of a thousand years ago, days spent millenniums hence, are in eternity no further off than is this moment I am passing now. A philosopher says: "He who has once been touched by truth, by right, by good, though it entailed the pangs of hell, that man could never turn therefrom, not for an instant." The man, who'er he be, moved by these three—truth, righteousness and goodness—can no more quit these three than God can quit his Godhood. Philosophers say that the soul is double-faced, her upper face gazes at God all the time and her lower face looks somewhat down, informing the senses. The upper face, which is the summit of the soul, is in eternity and has nothing to do with time.

—MEISTER ECKHART

THE FIRST LINE OF EVOLUTION

STUDENTS of comparative religion become increasingly aware of the fact that St. Paul's doctrine of body, soul, and spirit, is in no sense peculiar to Christian philosophy, but is part and parcel of the once universally diffused teachings of the Secret Doctrine—known to the world today as Theosophy, or the Wisdom Religion. It is the *Triad* of the Greeks, the *Trimurti* of the Hindu Pantheon, and the *Trinity* of every religious cult or sect worthy of the name. The grand Pantheistic ideal, of the unknown and unknowable Essence being transformed first into subjective, and then into objective matter, is at the root of all these triads and triplets.

This threefold scheme of Nature and of Man, while passively subscribed to by theologians of the Western world, has never been made the point of departure, unfortunately, for any serious inquiry into the powers and functions of soul and spirit—those higher aspects of the Trinity which alone give meaning and purpose to life and its problems. Broad-minded religious scholars, it is true, have ceased to ally themselves with those dogmatic critics of Darwin who see in evolution and its laws nothing but "vanity and a striving after wind," yet none seem to possess the courage or the insight to take the next step forward, and apply Nature's law of growth and unfoldment to soul and spirit, as well as to the body. Metaphysical application of this kind would be too much to expect, of course, of the materialistic scientist, to whom any mention of soul and spirit is as much "a weariness of the flesh," and "vanity of all vanities," as were all forms of worldly knowledge to the son of David, who called himself "Preacher" (Ecclesiastes). Even the evolutionists, who for more than a century have been playing hide and seek with their "missing links," seem peculiarly disinclined to take a clue from *The Secret Doctrine,* where not *one* but *three* lines of evolution are portrayed, and with such majesty and purview as would solve, at least for the intuitive mind, most of the problems with which the subject is surrounded.

> It now becomes plain that there exists in Nature a triple evolutionary scheme . . . or rather three separate schemes of evolution, which in our system are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point. These are the Monadic (or spiritual), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions.

> Each of these three systems has its own laws, and is ruled and guided by different sets of the highest Dhyanis or "Logoi." Each is represented in the constitution of man, the Microcosm of the great Macrocosm; and it is the union of these three streams in him which makes him the complex being he now is. (*The Secret Doctrine,* I, 181.)

The *Monad,* as *potentia,* neither progresses nor develops—yet in it is contained the secret of all evolution, the potentiality of all future growth and unfoldment. The monad of the *grub,* viewed from the position of physical plane evolution alone, may seem to develop, and to change through transformation into that of the butterfly. Viewed from the plane of Spirit, however, it would be seen that the *One* changes not at all, that through countless ages of so-called evolutionary growth from the simple to the complex, it (the Monad) only exhibits differentiated aspects of itself to the perception of finite minds. For *Monad* is just another name for the One Life as it dwells in various forms, itself changeless, though ever changing its forms.

It is a fundamental teaching of theosophic philosophy that evolution begins at the top, in Spirit—and not at the bottom, in matter, as taught by physical science. The prime factor in all phases of organic growth and development is the all-containing *Monad,* which is present in every being and in every particle of matter, and in which lies concealed the potentiality of all future becoming. The Monad is not of the material plane, but of the spiritual. How many students of the Wisdom Religion have taken to heart the suggestion in the *Voice of the Silence* that, "That which is uncreate abides in thee, Disciple, as it abides in that Hall"—the Hall of Wisdom? How many have overcome the illusion that *to educate* means to put something into the mind instead of "to draw out," as the derivation of the term implies? Within man, at the root of his being, as within every atom, the seed of the universe is contained. And if mankind in general, and individual units of the race in particular, have failed to reach up to and realize the greatness of the human heart, it is probably because we have never even understood the extent of its powers. "You ought always to keep in mind," said Wm. Q. Judge, "the three distinctions of *physical, psychic* (or intellectual), *and spiritual, always remembering that the last includes the other two.*"

It is because of man's failure to realize the nature of the *Trinity,* perhaps, that the religious scriptures of all nations oftentimes appear to be so vague and contradictory. Present-day Christianity, for example,

continues to be divided on the age-old question of *salvation*—whether it be through *works,* through *knowledge,* or through *grace,* as the gift of God. Is it possible that when St. Paul admonished his brethren to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2: 12), he was speaking from the point of view of the *physical* line of evolution —where the law is that of action and reaction, cause and effect, and where men must "render account for every careless word they utter"? Might it be that when he spoke of the "treasures of wisdom and knowledge," he referred to the requirements for intellectual growth and unfoldment, and that in his doctrine of *salvation by grace,* the monadic scheme of evolution was his theme?

The complexity of man's nature and the existence in him of three separate lines of evolution, each with its own laws, necessitates several dimensions of inquiry for those who would enter the realm of psychology. The laws of *physical* evolution pertain only to the personal man and his welfare during the period of incarnated existence upon earth. The physical laws, however, are interblended with, and oftentimes superseded by, those of the mind, and the cooperative action of the two produces effects wholly unattainable by outward act alone. The superiority of the intellectually evolved person is seen in the example of the jeweler and the ploughman, both engaged in the act of selling a precious stone. The knowledge of the jeweler bears better fruit than the ignorance of the ploughman. How much more subtle and dynamic the laws of the spiritual world, and how majestic must be the powers and faculties of the mind illumined by Monadic light!

Krishna, throughout the eighteen chapters of *The Bhagavad-Gita,* seems to take for granted the three distinct lines of evolution in Nature and in man. Salvation, or complete and final liberation, as it is there called, demands appropriate action on each of the three planes of being. On the plane of the body, for example, he says: "Do not be incited to actions by the hope of their reward, nor let thy life be spent in inaction. Firmly persisting in Yoga, perform thy duty, O Dhananjaya, and laying aside all desire for any benefit to thyself from action, make the event equal to thee, whether it be success or failure." Bodily act is always modified by the knowledge and disposition of the mind. These two departments of man's being, each possessed of its own laws, act and re-act one upon the other. Of the relative importance of the two, Krishna says: "Yet the performance of works is by far inferior to mental devotion . . .

for knowledge is better than constant practice . . . Even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge." Above both *action* and *knowledge,* however, stands *meditation,* through whose laws, rightly understood and used, one prepares himself for illumination from above. "There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master—*Ishwara*—who by his magic power causeth all things and creatures to revolve mounted upon the universal wheel of time. Take sanctuary with him alone, O son of Bharata, with all thy soul; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place." St. Paul's expression of the laws pertaining to the first, or monadic line of evolution, the most difficult of all, no doubt, to explain, is found in these words: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing [not the doing, that is, of the *personal man*], it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2: 8-9).

How was H. P. Blavatsky, in the laborious task of recording the message of Theosophy for this age, able to quote from rare and unheard of books, copies of which were to be found only in distant libraries scattered throughout the world? How were Buddha, Jesus and Apollonius able to raise the dead, heal the sick, and feed the multitudes by methods totally unknown to the people with whom they lived? How could any of the historical Sages know what they knew, and do what they did, except through experience of a partial or complete synchronization, in their lives, of the laws of all three planes of being?

Monad means *one*—hence the first law of the monadic life, insofar as is useful for ordinary mortals to know, perhaps, is Unity, Oneness, Brotherhood. The more one can overcome the feeling of separateness and realize the oneness of his Higher Self with the One Absolute Self, the more will his mind and heart become grafted onto the Monadic trunk. Then comes spiritual knowledge, that referred to, no doubt, by the Son of David, and in comparison with which, indeed, is all worldly wisdom but "vanity," and "vexation of spirit." When the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity has been formed, it matters little by how few, the laws of grace become operative, and the spirit of solidarity and perfect harmony that reigns on the monadic plane must extend over and protect the shining rays in every particular.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

ALTHOUGH man may be "the most intelligent being in the universe," he seems also to be the one creature in nature that habitually creates messes which affect future generations. Why should the "brute" forces of nature function so beautifully and economically, while everything man touches soon becomes covered with soot?

When a person turns his mind from the "solemn trifles" of society to a contemplation of the sea or of a virgin wilderness, he cannot help but feel a subtle sense of refreshment, as though the mental pictures were a fresh breeze sweeping life into his stale mental atmosphere. His thoughts are at once shifted from smallness to greatness, from squalor to unbounded cleanness, from strife to harmony. "Society seems noxious," said Emerson. "I believe that against these baleful influences Nature is the antidote. The man comes out of the wrangle of the shop and office, and sees the sky and the woods, and is a man again." Nature is medicinal and inspirational to man, perhaps, because it follows its laws perfectly, even if blindly; for, as we know, visible nature is a projection, and therefore a symbol, of the boundless Deity Principle, and as such is our primary means for gaining a greater realization of that Principle. Emerson came close to this concept of the symbology of nature when he said: "That which once existed in intellect as pure law, has now taken body as Nature. It existed in the mind as solution; now, it has been precipitated, and the bright sediment is the world."

Though the lower kingdoms instinctively exemplify the balance of the Universal Law, the majority of mankind, misusing the privilege of self-consciousness, does not. Having gained the knowledge of good and evil, or of the natural and unnatural, man has acquired the power of choice, and so has fallen from the simplicity of the "state of grace" into the confusing realm of moral complexity.

That we have made many wrong choices since that "fall" is perhaps evidenced by our present lack of harmony with nature. It would seem that to restore that harmony on *all* planes of consciousness is our primary concern in evolution. When man has finally accomplished this task, he will no longer create "messes" of any kind, but will be ready to

assume more actively what Emerson considers man's true position, that of the "head and heart" of nature; for although man's self-awareness has greatly increased his difficulties, it has, at the same time, greatly increased his potentialities as well. It may be for this reason that no matter how moved one may be by the splendors of nature, he will usually be most inspired at the sight of a single human being prevailing in the struggle against the evil in his own nature. The *Dhammapada* (p. 20) describes the path of such a man: "He whose appetites are slain and who is indifferent to food, who has perceived the goal of freedom by realizing that life is empty and transient, his path is hard to trace like the flight of birds through the sky." The simile is suggestive, for it implies that the perfected man, although acutely self-aware, is able to lead life as naturally as the wild creatures, leaving behind no ugly marks, making no claims on life, but simply doing his part, and going his way in silence.

Another way of putting this question is: "Why is it only man who must learn *how* to learn, whereas all other degrees of consciousness eagerly learn that which comes to them, never saying, "This doesn't suit me, I shall do *that*." The point is that we are such complex beings —and we have won not only the power of choice but are also faced with the ever-present questions of right and wrong, better or dearer.

It is not easy to find and live by some basic, true, simple principles which bring the issues of good and evil down to attitudes and motivations within the man himself, rather than placing blame on adverse circumstances, on frustrating environment, or on the mistakes of some other person. Yet "nature," the same great environment for everyone, is itself in harmony. And so it is quite true that within the atmosphere of Great Nature many "big" problems dwindle to nothing, and one is able to take hold of life and gain a feeling of real progress. Many people who have lived in small communities close to nature have been able to comprehend psychological as well as physical problems in fairly clear terms. Our task today is to see through and discard all the superficial living and get down to what is important to the *real* in us—which is also what is "natural" in the higher sense.

PROEM

II

SYMBOLISM, taken from "Pages from a Pre-historic Period," is the immediate subject-matter of the Proem. Occult symbolism, in its essential meaning, has not changed throughout ages. There is, in the Occult symbol, a power inherent that *implicates,* in a peculiar way, the mind that strives to grasp its meaning. The highest power of the mind is evoked—as the first footnote indicates:

> Only those who realise how far Intuition soars above the tardy processes of ratiocinative thought can form the faintest conception of that absolute Wisdom which transcends the ideas of Time and Space.

How can a symbol—the pictorial expression of an idea or thought—transcend the measure of Time and the limiting aspects of Space? By its abstract quality. The abstract idea communicates through the abstract symbol to the mind that is unbounded by preconception, uncolored by misconception, undistorted by ambitious desires, unconcerned with fearful imaginings or hopes of personal salvation. "Mind, as we know it," continues the footnote, "is resolvable into states of consciousness, of varying duration, intensity, complexity, etc.—all, in the ultimate, resting on sensation, which is Maya. Sensation, again, postulates limitation." The intuitive mind soars above the lower, personal and sensational levels; like the bird that mounts without the flapping of wings, the intuition rises directly and with certainty; it "flies like light and cuts all obstacles as with a sword." Its characteristic quality is to "look directly upon ideas"—Patanjali's statement of Soul-vision.

There are no ancient symbols without a deep and philosophical meaning attached to them, their importance and significance often increasing with their antiquity. The most archaic symbols in Eastern Esotericism are a circle, a point, a triangle, a plane, a cube, a pentacle, and a hexagon, and plane figures with various sides and angles. This shows the knowledge and use of geometrical symbology to be as old as the world. But human knowledge has its boundaries, as the symbols on the first page of the Proem indicate—and the preliminary outline of the Stanzas of Dzyan (p. 21) explains:

The First Stanza describes the state of the ONE ALL during Pralaya, before the first flutter of re-awakening manifestation.

A moment's thought shows that such a state can only be symbolised; to describe it is impossible. Nor can it be symbolised except in negatives; for, since it is the state of Absoluteness *per se,* it can possess none of those specific attributes which serve us to describe objects in positive terms. Hence this state can only be suggested by the negatives of all those most abstract attributes which men feel rather than conceive, as the remotest limits attainable by the power of conception.

The state described in Stanza II is, to the Western mind, so nearly identical with that mentioned in the first Stanza, that to express the idea of its difference would require a treatise in itself. Hence it must be left to the intuition and the higher faculties of the reader to grasp, as far as he can, the meaning of the allegorical phrases used. Indeed it must be remembered that all these Stanzas appeal to the inner faculties rather than to the ordinary comprehension of the physical brain.

Stanza III describes the Re-awakening of the Universe to life after Pralaya. It depicts the emergence of the "Monads" from their state of absorption within the ONE; the earliest and highest stage in the formation of "Worlds," the term Monad being one which may apply equally to the vastest Solar System or the tiniest atom.

> Stanza IV shows the differentiation of the "Germ" of the Universe into . . . .

"Our knowledge," said Wm. Q. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy,* "begins with differentiation." The symbols of Occultism precede that point—symbols succeed in communicating where language fails.

Resting on the illusionary aspect of the differentiating and evolutionary process—the Maya of manifestation—the mind, in order to understand, tends to identify with what is seen and sensed. The extreme of this use of mind becomes the "killing materialism of the age; that peculiar twist in the modern mind, which, like a Northern blast, bends all on its way, and freezes every intuition, allowing it no hand in the physical speculations of the day."

Spiritual freedom of the mind is paramount. It is implicit in all the counsels of *The Voice of the Silence.* But consider—what is the origin of the *Voice?* It is derived from the *Book of the Golden Precepts* which, in turn, forms part of the same series as that from which the "Stanzas" of the *Book of Dzyan* were taken. They are, in the truest sense, complementary: the Book of Counsel, and the Book of Wisdom. These are the words from the *Voice*:

> The seeds of Wisdom cannot sprout and grow in airless space. To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in Maya's realm; but soar beyond illusion, search the eternal and the changeless Sat, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions.

Occult symbols provide a critical area of experience; they invite the mind to "soar beyond illusion," or, in the words of Thomas Taylor, intuitive translator of the Greek Fragments, ". . . like a bridge, to pass over the obscurity of a material nature, as over some dark sea, to the luminous regions of perfect reality." Contemplation of Reality keeps alive the spiritual intuitions and arouses into activity the dormant spiritual Eye.

The ONE REALITY is *absolute abstraction.* "Darkness is around his pavilion," said Wm. Q. Judge in the *Ocean of Theosophy,* quoting a biblical phrase. "Absolute abstraction" is a phrase to muse upon; it stills the vaunted intellect. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

> The final step in the process of abstraction is the conception of the Absolute, which is abstract in the most complete sense.
>
> The process of knowledge in the sphere of intellect as in that of natural science is one of generalization, *i.e.* the co-ordination of particular facts under general statements, or in other words, the explanation of one fact by another, and that by a third, and so on. In this way the particular facts or existences are left behind in the search for higher, more inclusive conceptions; as twigs are traced to one branch, and branches to one trunk, so, it is held, all the plurality of sense data is absorbed in a unity which is all-inclusive and self-existent, and has no "beyond." . . . .
>
> The fundamental problem [in statements of "the Absolute"] is whether a thing which is by hypothesis infinite can in any sense be defined, and if it is not defined, whether it can be said to be cognized or thought. It would appear to be almost an axiom that anything which by hypothesis transcends the intellect (*i.e.* by including subject and object, knowing and known) is *ipso facto* beyond the limits of the knower. Only an Absolute can cognize an absolute.

In this last, it may perhaps be said, is an unstriven-for application of the Upanishadic thought: THAT THOU ART. The innateness of the idea is compellingly presented in *The Secret Doctrine,* in the chapter, "Primordial Substance and Divine Thought." On page 340, Volume I, it says: "The one prevailing, most distinct idea—found in all ancient teaching, with reference to Cosmic Evolution and the first 'creation' of our Globe with all its products, organic and *inorganic* (strange word

for an occultist to use)—is that the whole Kosmos has sprung from the DIVINE THOUGHT. This thought impregnates matter, which is co-eternal with the ONE REALITY; and all that lives and breathes evolves from the emanations of the ONE Immutable—Parabrahm = Mulaprakriti, the eternal one-root."

> The former of these is, so to say, the aspect of the central point turned inward into regions quite inaccessible to human intellect, and is absolute abstraction; whereas, in its aspect as *Mulaprakriti*—the eternal root of all—it gives one some hazy comprehension at least of the Mystery of Being.

The symbols in the manuscript "from a pre-historic period" antecede the Mystery of Being, and the mystery of "Creation." Since they represent the most abstract ideas conceivable, they are, necessarily, the simplest: a disk, a point. According to the Proem:

> On the first page is an immaculate white disk within a dull black ground. On the following page, the same disk, but with a central point. The first, the student knows to represent Kosmos in Eternity, before the re-awakening of still slumbering Energy, the emanation of the Word in later systems. The point in the hitherto immaculate Disk, Space and Eternity in Pralaya, denotes the dawn of differentiation. It is the Point in the Mundane Egg, the germ within the latter which will become the Universe, the ALL, the boundless, periodical Kosmos, this germ being latent and active, periodically and by turns.

The abstractness of these ideas suggests the need for considering the abstract qualities of the symbols themselves—since the human mind tends to visualize, to objectify, to materialize even the most general concept. It is no wonder that the Platonists made the study of geometry preliminary to the study of philosophy. Symbols serve to focus the mind at another level.

What is a point? A point does not occupy space. It is indivisible, having neither length, width, nor thickness. It indicates nothing more than a position in space. It is represented by a dot, which has length, width, and even an imperceptible thickness. We can see a dot. We can never actually see a point. The point, also, is an indivisible portion of time; it indicates a particular moment—the moment when something is about or likely to take place. How does this apply to the above quotation? The point *in Space* denotes the "dawn"—or promise—of differentiation: "potential Space within abstract Space." The point *in Time*

is the germ "which will become" the Universe—the boundless, periodical Kosmos.

What is a circle? The form of a circle is familiar to all and needs no definition. As symbol, the circle is alive with meaning. The Circle was with every nation the symbol of the Unknown—"Boundless Space," the abstract garb of an ever present abstraction—the Incognizable Deity. The circle also represents limitless Time in Eternity:

> The one circle is divine Unity, from which all proceeds, whither all returns. Its circumference—a forcibly limited symbol, in view of the limitation of the human mind—indicates the abstract ever incognisable PRESENCE, and its plane, the Universal Soul, although the two are one. . . . It is on this plane that the Manvantaric manifestations begin; for it is in this SOUL that slumbers, during the Pralaya, the Divine Thought, wherein lies concealed the plan of every future Cosmogony and Theogony.

The circle *in Space,* and the circle *in Time* represent UNITY—unmanifested and manifested; they are one.

The circumference of the circle-symbol cannot be defined. As does the point in the Circle, so the circumference but "indicates" the abstract PRESENCE—the Reality that IS—out of all relation to manifested existence.

The plane of the boundless Circle more specifically exemplifies the unity of the divine "Essence." *In Space* it is the Universal Soul—"in this SOUL slumbers, during the Pralaya, the Divine Thought, wherein lies concealed the plan of every future Cosmogony and Theogony." *In Time* it is:

> The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing," called "the manifesting stars," and the "sparks of Eternity," . . . "the appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux."

And what of *the diameter* of the circle? There is a deeply relevant passage in Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine,* page 553:

> In the Secret Doctrine the concealed UNITY—whether representing Parabrahman, or the "GREAT EXTREME" of Confucius, or the Deity concealed by PHTA, the Eternal Light, or again the Jewish En-Soph, is always symbolized by a circle or nought (absolute No-thing and nothing, because it is infinite and the ALL; while the god-manifested (by its works) is referred to as the *diameter of that circle.* The symbolism

> of the underlying idea is thus made evident: the right line passing through the centre of a circle has, in the geometrical sense, length, but neither breadth nor thickness: it is an imaginary and feminine symbol, crossing eternity and made to rest on the plane of existence *of the phenomenal world.* It is *dimensional,* whereas its circle is dimensionless, or, to use an algebraical term, it is the dimension of an equation.

The diameter transfers the Circle from the realm of pure abstraction to the plane of measurement, of relationships *in Space,* involving cycles, order, sequence *in Time*—cause and effect.

The living, moving, qualifying, modifying, *transforming* character of the Universe in manifestation is captured in the geometrical symbol of the polygon—a plane figure bounded by straight lines called sides, which form angles. The smallest number of sides that a polygon can have is three, say, an equilateral triangle. As the number of sides and angles increases, an interesting *transformation* takes place: it becomes more and more like a circle. Ultimately, one may think of a circle as a regular polygon with *an infinite number of sides.* And, as said in the *Light of Asia,* "The Universe grows I."

> And now thy Self is lost in SELF, Thyself unto THYSELF, merged in THAT SELF from which thou first didst radiate. (*Voice of the Silence.*)

. . . . . .

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages: the Wisdom that transcends Time and Space.

SHADOWS OF SPEECH

One of the greater mischiefs which confront us today is the growing debasement of the language. Our speech is a mere shadow of its incomparable richness, having on the one hand become vulgarized and on the other corrupted with a particularly odious academic jargon. Now this is dangerous. A civilization which loses its power over its own language has lost its power over the instrument by which it thinks. Without some power over language there is neither greatness nor accuracy of thought. I am sure that this wasting disease of our English speech is one of the causes of today's bewilderment.

—HENRY BESTON

CLICHÉ OR MANTRA?

KNOWLEDGE of the duality of the manifested world furnishes the student with a check point, a means of evaluating aspects of conditioned existence. An illustration which each one can examine for himself is the faculty of memory. From one viewpoint it is a single function, yet it has both positive and negative results.

The ability to repeat a phrase from Theosophical texts is accompanied by a feeling of satisfaction. One has recognized the truth of the statement and adopted it as being accurate, succinct, one-pointed. Further, it can be brought forth with a confidence similar to the surety with which one anticipates a predictable physical reaction. Yet it is this very quality of instantaneous response by the memory which must be guarded against when we are dealing with ideas of a philosophic nature. Man's higher mind is creative. Since this is the area in which he acts as a Chooser, it would seem to be the one in which his reaction or response would not fall into a set pattern.

It is well-known that universal value-ideas such as love of country (patriotism), mother-love, or love for "the grandeur of nature," which have been the subjects of artists in various media are also the very ideas that have been cheapened, made trite and sentimentalized. As Aldous Huxley wrote in his essay, *Art and the Obvious,* "All great truths are obvious truths. But not all obvious truths are great truths." He extends the idea by indicating that the inexplicable in some modern art is an attempt to avoid the obvious expression of a great idea because the artist has seen how the universal has been given hackneyed treatment by those who lacked true inspiration.

So, too, a proverb represents a bit of folk-wisdom which has been perpetuated because its truth is readily grasped. Yet when uttered with an air of profundity there is a tendency toward negative reaction on the part of a listener who may sense behind words of meaning an emptiness of mind.

Are words truly "living messengers," as William Q. Judge phrased it? This depends on whether they constitute a cliché or a mantra. Cliché comes from the French *clicher*—to stereotype. In printing a process was developed to cast type metal in a mold, and, by extension, this came to mean to "fix in lasting form." But note that it is the *form* which

is of significance, and the facility whereby the impression can be repeated.

A mantra may also be considered a form in that ritualistic formulas from the *Vedas* are repeated, but if with knowledge, bringing very different results. The occult aspect of the mantra is of major importance in the Brahmanic liturgy.

> The Mimansa darshana supports a theory of the infallibility of the Vedas and a theory of meaning as inherent in sound: Sanskrit, the holy language of the Vedas, that is to say, is not a historical tongue based on convention, but an emanation of Being (*sat*) in sound (*sabda*); hence the power of the sacred mantras and of the Vedic hymns to touch the quick of truth and so to work magic. (Zimmer: *Philosophies of India*)

Along this line H.P.B., in the *Secret Doctrine,* indicates that:

> In the Sanskrit, as also in the Hebrew and all other alphabets, every letter has its occult meaning and its rationale; it is a cause and an effect of a preceding cause and a combination of these often produces the most magical effect. The vowels, especially, contain the most occult and formidable potencies. The Mantras (esoterically, magical rather than religious) are chanted by the Brahmins and so are the Vedas and other scriptures.

She further states:

> *The spoken word has a potency unknown to, unsuspected and disbelieved in,* by the modern "sages." Sound and rhythm are closely related to the four Elements of the Ancients; and such or another vibration in the air is sure to awaken corresponding powers, union with which produces good or bad results, as the case may be.

In Tibet, prayer-wheels and fluttering flags bear the sacred words *Om mani padme hum.* Imprinted thousands of times they are thought to gain increased potency by virtue of this repetition. Yet for a devotee to give true expression to this phrase is a difficult exercise, one requiring use of all his faculties and utmost concentration before the finality of vocalization is achieved.

When first enunciated, a statement represents embodied truth. Each time it is repeated it exhibits diminishing force unless mental activity or, in the case of philosophic statements, intuitive response, is aroused. It is possible for words of wisdom to be called to mind and given vocal expression thoughtfully, in which case they are truly mantramic.

ON THE LOOKOUT

A Broader Look at ESP

Hidden Channels of the Mind, by Dr. Louisa E. Rhine (William Sloane Associates, 1961), is an engaging attempt to bridge the gap between "spontaneous" psychic phenomena—as they may occur in the life of any one of us—and years of experimental work at the Duke University parapsychological laboratories. In 1948, it occurred to both J. B. and Louisa Rhine that there was one obvious shortcoming in the mass of material which established ESP factors by way of experiment: quite simply, the average person did not relate these experiences to *himself.* It seemed to the author of *Hidden Channels of the Mind* that a careful winnowing of a large correspondence received from interested persons, since the results of the laboratory data were made public, would interest a much wider public. In the preparation of such a book the aim was:

> To get a more rounded, full-bodied conception of the effects trapped so laboriously in the laboratory. After all, one can see so little of a natural process where the conditions must necessarily be restricted and artificial. An experiment has to be, to a degree, a distortion of nature, for all aspects of the setting must be so controlled that only one explanation for the effect secured is possible. One then needs to watch nature's way, even when experimenting. It is almost like an artist watching his scene with intermittent glances, even as he applies the paint to canvas.

Truth-Seeking as well as "Wonder"-Seeking

Of particular interest to students of the Theosophical Movement are Mrs. Rhine's observations in her opening chapter concerning the willingness of most of her correspondents to place their own psychic experiences before investigators in the interest of truth—rather than a clinging to the belief that such experiences were entirely unique and a mark of special "divine" favor. By and large, in our day, those who are willing to discuss psychic experiences seem to be of a constructive scientific temperament, which is a somewhat different situation from that which obtained from 1848 through the early 1900's. Dr. Rhine writes:

> Although many individuals seemed hesitant and even a bit apologetic to be writing about a personal matter and admitting that such

an inexplicable thing should have happened to them (many said in effect, "If someone else had told this to me I wouldn't have believed it"), perhaps the most frequently expressed motive for writing, in literally thousands of letters, was, "I hope this will help in your researches."

Their feeling about contributing to the research deserves special comment. It shows that many people will overcome their inherent reticence, take the time and make the effort to help *find out the truth*—a widespread urge to push back the border of the unknown that has no doubt contributed to the progress science has made in all fields. Perhaps it is particularly strong in people whose own experience gives them a personal interest in research in parapsychology, for they have reasons to be aware of its neglect and to be convinced of the importance of finding the explanations.

WIDE RANGE OF "COMMON" EXPERIENCES

"Common" types of ESP include accurate impressions of other's thoughts, hidden objectives, visions from the future, paranormal cognition in childhood, warning visions, and ostensible communications from the dead. Unlike Prof. Hornell Hart's *The Enigma of Survival* (see p. 234), Dr. Rhine is not particularly interested in spiritualist testimony, though it is given some mention. What seems most fascinating to both the Rhines is the possibility that there are certain latent capacities in man which may become useful as powers for good, for an extension of the human potential in daily life. This is made clear in two paragraphs in a chapter entitled "Communications from Beyond":

A number of occurrences, particularly most of the "death coincidences," that once quite reasonably were considered evidence of survival have now lost their weight since they can equally well be seen as indications of the psi powers of the living. With this balancing thought in mind we can still recognize the meaning of the establishment of psi on the question of survival. Psi, whether expressed in personal experiences or occurring in the confines of laboratory experiments, shows the human being possessed of abilities transcending those of his purely physical and sensory make-up. Those abilities or qualities in themselves are of the order of the spiritual, if by that is meant extra-physical. They may be the first clear evidence of it the age of science has produced.

The scientific approach to this great area—that is, to the unusual abilities of the human being and to the ultimate destiny of personality—is a relatively new one. Whatever the value of the older ways of dealing with this area has been—and we must be grateful for all they have brought and conserved for civilization—this scientific approach

> has now been introduced and been shown to be a fruitful way of gaining wider knowledge and understanding of man's inner nature. Even though still in its early stages, it is an approach which promises to open new vistas if the world wants the answers enough to make the effort to find them out.

A Philosophical Perspective

From the Theosophic point of view, all the published works of Drs. J. B. and Louisa Rhine seem to be well oriented and thoughtfully conceived. While no positive speculative philosophy is attached in order to place the ESP phenomena within a single context, this is all to the good—leaving the individual student with a stimulus to *find* such a philosophical context for himself. In respect to the whole question of a life of the soul beyond the life of the body, the statements in *Hidden Channels of the Mind* are provocative, rather than declamatory, and Dr. Louisa Rhine makes it clear that none of the psychic experiences basically change our nature as human beings or our obligations to choose and to act. She says that "we shall have no more, no less freedom because we know that some dreams come true, that sometimes the distant is nearer than the near, that sometimes the future is foreseen." On the question of immortality, Dr. Rhine writes:

> As we realize more and more that the world is larger than it seems, and that we are more than the sense-bound mortals a mechanistic stage of science tends to make us think we are, we shall like the expanded universe. We shall see that if people have this potential, the universe is greater than it seemed. We shall realize that, *logically* at least, there is room enough for the continuation of something of personality after the senses have ceased to function. Whether or not such continuation is a fact, or just what the form or *modus operandi* of it could be, is and long may remain an unsettled question. But at least from this perspective, one can see that it *could be*.

A Quotation from W. Macneile Dixon

The cycle of blind skepticism in respect to the existence of "realms behind the senses" has largely run its course—as was predicted by H. P. Blavatsky in both *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. During the interim, however, there have been those of broad sympathies and interests who have been neither believers in spiritualism nor disbelievers in the psychic realm. Such an one was that "Theosophist unaware," W. Macneile Dixon, who in 1934 recommended just such a study as that which the Drs. Rhine now propose. Dixon wrote:

What mean these premonitions and apparitions, these tales of far sight in time and in space, of pre-cognition and retro-cognition, of stigmata and faith cures, of crystal vision and alternating personalities, of dowsing and divining rods, of telepathy and hyperaesthesia, of hypnosis and suggestion—of which, it is said, there are some seven hundred explanatory theories—of monitions and intuitions like those of Socrates and Joan of Arc? They meet you everywhere, in every age, in every literature, in every quarter of the globe. Do not let us talk of the credible and the incredible until we have looked further into these among many other things; from which, if well understood, a new vision of truth might arise. We are not to assume that what we do not now know will never be known. The study to which I refer has nothing to do with spiritualism or with religion. It is simply an enquiry into such occurrences as should not on our present theory of knowledge take place at all. As Schopenhauer insisted, "the phenomena under consideration are incomparably the most important among all the facts presented to us by the whole of experience from a philosophical point of view; so it is the duty of every man of science to get acquainted with them, and to study them thoroughly." And if a tenth, a hundredth part of what competent observers in this field report be true, the castle of our thought may need rebuilding from its foundations.

"Scientific Method" Applied to Spiritualism

The Enigma of Survival, by Prof. Hornell Hart (Charles C. Thomas, 1959), is one of the latest additions to the rapidly-increasing documentary accounts of psychic phenomena. Prof. Hart's personal belief is that "human personality *does* survive bodily death," but he feels that "the evidence on which the survivalist case rests" is most strongly supported by "that received through mediums and that provided by apparitions." This book, then, suggests an entirely different orientation from that provided by such explorations as those of Ian Stevenson and C. J. Ducasse —both of whom affirm that the most fruitful discussions of the possibility of survival after death should take into account the hypothesis of reincarnation. (See THEOSOPHY 49:350, 567 and 47:39, respectively.)

Old Garments, New Trimmings

Despite its scientific vocabulary and approach, *The Enigma of Survival* is cast very much in the old Spiritualist mold. Prof. Hart, however, does provide useful analyses of ESP phenomena. He describes the trend toward "respectability" of ESP investigation in these words:

> As in the history of other scientific discoveries, research on ESP began with people noticing puzzling facts. Events kept happening

which seemed to be beyond explanation by any ordinary contact through sight, hearing, touch, or the other senses. Then experiments (more or less crude ones at first) were carried out to see whether extrasensory perception actually occurred. When these rough and informal experiments gave what seemed to be convincing results, the sceptics raised objections. In response to these criticisms the parapsychologists tightened up their conditions, step by step, so as to eliminate one conceivable alternative hypothesis after another.

The Persona

After presenting many evidences of ESP, mediumistic "materializations," apparitions, etc., and discussing them at length (including rebuttal of non-survivalist arguments), Prof. Hart suggests that the objections of skeptics may all be reconciled by the "persona theory":

> The persona (as the theory is being presented in this chapter) consists in the entire structure of the apparition (or of the mediumistic communicator) including his body, his clothing, his memories and purposes, and his ideas, attitudes and interests. All of these form a complex which is accessible through ESP. If ESP is of the form of clairvoyance, then the experience of the observer is visual in character. It may be clairaudient, clairactual, or telepathic. In some cases, the apparition's body and clothing may be (to a greater or less extent) materialized, so that perception is actually visual, auditory, or tactual, and so that it may be shared by more than one non-clairvoyant percipient.

Distinction Between Persona and Etheric Body

> Now if the persona serves as the vehicle through which a surviving personality (or an ESP-projectionist) is observing and acting, that inhabiting consciousness is aware of the body in a different sense from his awareness of the clothing, the cane, the hand-bag, or the like. The etheric body is one which he feels to be his own. He uses it. He receives sensations through it.
>
> Moreover, normally embodied self must be regarded as having a persona. This follows necessarily from the fact that he is consciously and unconsciously aware of his physical body, his clothing and material possessions, and his ideas, attitudes, memories and purposes. But here again, his awareness of his own body is different from his awareness of his clothing. His body is a much more constant factor in his consciousness than any garment or any physical possession can be. Hence the "etheric body" would naturally be expected to have characteristics distinguishing it from other parts of the persona. And yet the persona would be expected to come and to go as a whole, much as dreams do.

PERSONA—KAMARUPA

The description of the "persona," as given by Prof. Hart, clearly equates with H.P.B.'s description of the Kamarupa; and a comparison of the two will dramatically point up the inadequacies of spiritualist treatment of the subject of materialization and apparitions. H.P.B. wrote:

> Metaphysically, and in our esoteric philosophy, it is the subjective form created through the mental and physical desires and thoughts in connection with things of matter, by all sentient beings, a form which survives the death of their bodies. After that death three of the seven "principles"—or let us say planes of senses and consciousness on which the human instincts and ideation act in turn—*viz.,* the body, its astral prototype and physical vitality, being of no further use, remain on earth; the three higher principles, grouped into one, merge into the state of Devachan, in which state the Higher Ego will remain until the hour for a new reincarnation arrives; and the *eidolon* of the ex-Personality is left alone in its new abode. Here, the pale copy of the man that was, vegetates for a period of time, the duration of which is variable and according to the element of materiality which is left in it, and which is determined by the past life of the defunct. Bereft as it is of its higher mind, spirit and physical senses, if left alone to its own senseless devices, it will gradually fade out and disintegrate. But, if forcibly drawn back into the terrestrial sphere whether by the passionate desires and appeals of the surviving friends or by regular necromantic practices—one of the most pernicious of which is mediumship—the "spook" may prevail for a period greatly exceeding the span of the natural life of its body. Once the Kamarupa has learnt the way back to living human bodies, it becomes a vampire, feeding on the vitality of those who are so anxious for its company. (*Glossary.*)

INTERPRET-AS-YOU-CHOOSE DEPARTMENT

The following item of astrological import appeared recently in the London *Sunday Dispatch*:

> An amazing and prodigious happening is about to take place in the heavens. For the first time in recorded history of mankind, five major planets, namely, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn will all enter the same 19 degree arc of the Zodiac—called Aquarius—together with the sun and the moon, in February, 1962.
>
> The astrologers of the World are in a ferment. "What," they ask themselves, "is going to happen?" Some of them, it seems, are about to make for the highest hills and wait for the end of the World in February, 1962. For five planets in conjunction have them gasping.

> Twice before there have been three,—just three—in such a situation. The first time this happened was in 577-574 B.C. During this time Buddha was born and transformed the life of the Eastern half of the World. The second time three planets entered a new sign together was in the period between 10 B.C. and 30 A.D. During this time Jesus was born and so transformed the life of the Western half of the World.
>
> The astrologers are expecting some mighty dynamic occurrence in an all-star performance, which will not be again due for thousands and thousands of years.

By the time this excerpt appears in Lookout students will be able to make an initial assessment of the validity of these prognostications.

Apprehension in India over Conjunction

Time for Jan. 19 reports that "the man in the street" in India is extremely apprehensive in regard to possible calamities which may attend the conjunction of planets on Feb. 3. The *Time* account, however, says that "astrologers note that this zodiacal rarity will happen in Capricorn, one of the 'unfavorable' signs of the heavens"; whereas the *Sunday Dispatch* assigns the conjunction to Aquarius. Be that as it may, the Indian populace is apparently powerfully stirred up over what they fear to be an ominous portent:

> According to India's astrologers, under the conjunction of the planets due early next month, the earth will be shattered by quakes, floods, air crashes, revolutions and wars, in what could be the worst concatenation of calamities in the last 5,000 years. . . .
>
> Indians know the stargazers have not always been wrong. In January 1934, there was a conjunction of seven planets just before the great Bihar earthquake destroyed 13 Indian and Nepalese cities and killed 10,000 people. Seven planets also came together in 3102 B.C.—the year of the Mahabharata war, which the old Hindu epics say brought bloody death to millions of Indians and, with their deaths, the end of an age.

"Tomorrow" on H.P.B.

Whatever its other virtues as a quarterly journal of parapsychology and Spiritualist information, the magazine *Tomorrow* must be charged with either negligence and irresponsibility or viciousness in its current handling of questions pertaining to H. P. Blavatsky. The Autumn, 1961 issue answers the question, "Was Madame Blavatsky ever exposed as a fraud?", with a decided affirmative. Among the slanderous passages, produced by an anonymous editor, are the following:

Madame Blavatsky, founder of the modern Theosophical Society, was a captivating, exciting, outrageous woman who made claims to numerous talents she did not possess, and whose false claims were repudiated.

According to Madame Blavatsky, there existed in Tibet a brotherhood whose members had acquired a power over nature which enabled them to perform wonders beyond the reach of ordinary men. She asserted herself to be their "Chela" or disciple, and they were alleged to have interested themselves in a special way in the Theosophical Society, and to have performed many marvels in connection with it. All of these phenomena were revealed by the Society for Psychical Research to have been performed by trickery.

DE PALM—AND A LETTER TO "TOMORROW"

After running lightly over H.P.B.'s alleged "immoralities," *Tomorrow* casually denies that she wrote *Isis Unveiled,* adopting without hint of questioning a charge begun by hostile critics when *Isis Unveiled* first appeared. This particular attack is in such flagrant neglect of clear historical evidence that a letter from the editors of THEOSOPHY seemed mandatory. It reads as follows:

Editor, *Tomorrow*:

You will no doubt receive a number of protests against the manner in which the question pertaining to H. P. Blavatsky was handled in your Autumn, 1961, issue (pp. 76-7).

As editors of one of the leading Theosophical publications, we are perplexed at the irresponsibility of many of the statements made, and feel that, not only should obvious misinformation in the "answer" be corrected, but that steps should be taken towards a bit of researching to prevent such a callow construction appearing in print in your often-worthwhile quarterly. John Symonds' *Madame Blavatsky: Medium and Magician* (published in the United States as *The Lady with the Magic Eyes*) was hardly written by a Blavatsky partisan nor in praise of her. But Symonds did demonstrate honest scholarship. We therefore call your attention to the contrast between the statement which appears on page 77 of *Tomorrow* and Mr. Symonds' conclusions as they appear on pages 90 and 92 of the aforementioned book. First, from *Tomorrow*:

> Another instance in which Madame Blavatsky was exposed was in connection with the book "Isis Unveiled," which she claimed to have written. It has been indicated instead that this book was written by an early Theosophist, who died and left this unpublished manuscript to the Society.

Now for Mr. Symonds on the subject of *Isis Unveiled*: After the author discusses the ridiculousness of a fabrication by some critics that the Baron de Palm (to whom *Tomorrow* obviously refers) left *Isis*

Unveiled in manuscript after his death, Symonds points out that "the Baron de Palm, who had never published a line in his life, achieved a posthumous fame as an author." He says further:

> Whether the public were ripe in 1877 for *Isis Unveiled,* or have grown ripe since, is a difficult question to answer; but within ten days of publication, and in spite of adverse notices, the book sold out. It was unprecedented for a work of this kind. The New York *Herald* was the only paper which seems to have made an effort to do the book justice. When H.P.B. read the review she almost fainted, or so she wrote to Aksakov. "I had prepared myself for general abuse, and here, believe it or not, is such praise and that from one of the most conservative, catholic papers. Look at the last paragraph, where it says that '*Isis Unveiled* is one of the remarkable productions of the century'."
>
> *Isis Unveiled* was not, some critics now said, a dish of hash; that was too summary a judgment. It was, on the contrary, an original and even important work, foreshadowing new intellectual interests such as telepathy and a less mechanical view of the nature of the human mind.

As we say, this from a popular author who is not a Theosophist nor a devotee of H.P.B.! Nor does any writer who has even dabbled in research in any way doubt H.P.B.'s authorship of *Isis.* We feel that

> if this one point is made clear in your columns, your readers will be in a better position to judge the extreme bias which finds its way into your pages from whatever discredited sources of information served as a background for your answer to your subscriber's question.
>
> The most authoritative biography of Madame Blavatsky, your editorial department should know, was written many years ago by William Kingsland—the title, *The Real H. P. Blavatsky.* Mr. Kingsland's scholarship was well enough recognized that his treatment of this amazing personality was selected by the *Britannica* for its biographical sketch, and has been reproduced in varying editions up to the present.
>
> Very truly yours,
> Editors, THEOSOPHY

COMPETENT SCHOLARSHIP

The Theosophical Movement is served—and this is always the case—not only by those who are in harmony with its central ideas, but by any scholar or author who is intellectually honest. A rather impressive example is supplied in a copyrighted column written by Mortimer Adler, Director of the Institute for Philosophical Research, in San Francisco, and a limelighter in the Great Books Adult Education Program. Dr. Adler was asked the following question by a Portland, Maine, housewife: "What do the great thinkers have to say about reincarnation? I

find proof of it in the greatest of all books—the Bible. The great thinkers of the past must have often pondered the subject." He answers:

> The view that the soul returns after death to inhabit another body is one of man's oldest and most universal beliefs. It was a central tenet of religion in ancient India, Egypt, and Greece. It has been a prevailing belief in primitive cultures and advanced civilizations.

THE TRACING OF A CONCEPT

Although Dr. Adler has seemed in many respects more personally inclined towards Thomist and Catholic philosophy than towards the Theosophical orientation, his treatment of the lineage of the philosophy of rebirth is quite thorough and excellently informative. The following paragraphs, for instance, appear—under the heading "Reincarnation Old Belief":

> In the higher religions, this belief in the transmigration of souls is connected with an ethical doctrine. The soul is rewarded or punished for its deeds in a previous existence by the kind of body to which it is assigned in its next incarnation. It is also thought that any kind of bodily existence is a burden and imprisonment.
>
> The Orphic doctrine of transmigration has come down to us mainly through Plato's dialogues. According to Plato, there are a fixed number of souls, each of which is eternal. Their real home is in a transcendent realm, but they are condemned to exile for a time in a series of earthly existences.
>
> The ultimate end of the soul, for Plato, is to escape from its imprisonment in bodies. Its final abode is a realm beyond the body, the senses, and the passions. However, the soul retains its distinctive individuality in the transcendent, metaphysical realm—in contrast with most other doctrines of transmigration.
>
> During the Christian era, belief in transmigration came down through heretical sects, neo-Platonic philosophy, and medieval Jewish mysticism. In modern times, it has been held with various degrees of seriousness by such thinkers as Bruno, Swedenborg, Goethe, Lessing, and Schopenhauer. It is a basic principle of Western "theosophy," which, however, finds the source of its teachings in India rather than in Greece.

Although Dr. Adler does not establish a clear distinction between doctrines of rebirth which involve transmigration into animal forms, he does essential justice to the concept of rebirth. This, certainly, is what one means by "honest scholarship"—an obligation of the intellect which the editorial writer responsible for the previously quoted remarks in *Tomorrow* has apparently yet to feel.